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**State Government Operations &  
Accountability Committee**

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**ESB 6010**

**Brief Description:** Granting a right of return to employment to state employees who leave employment to serve as Peace Corps or humanitarian organization volunteers or on faith-based missions.

**Sponsors:** Senator Fairley.

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill**

- Allows a state employee who leaves state employment to participate in the Peace Corps or humanitarian or faith-based programs to be restored to his or her previous position or an equivalent one upon return.
- Extends the benefits received by state employees on leaves of absence to those participating in the Peace Corps or humanitarian or faith-based programs.

**Hearing Date:** 3/25/05

**Staff:** Hannah Lidman (786-7291).

**Background:**

Leave without pay must be granted to state employees on or called to active military duty. Discretionary leave without pay may be granted to state employees for a number of reasons if the leave will not operate to the detriment of state service. Such reasons include:

- educational leave;
- U.S. Public Health Service and Peace Corps leave;
- leave taken to reduce the effect of an agency reduction in force;
- pre-authorized leave accommodations for the disabled; and
- formal collective bargaining leave.

Employees returning from authorized leave without pay must be employed in the same or equivalent position in the same geographical area, unless the return to state employment conflicts with rules relating to a reduction in force. Leave without pay does not affect an employee's periodic increment date.

Generally, state employees on leave without pay do not accrue vacation leave, as employees must work at least half time to qualify for vacation leave. A state employee on unpaid leave may use vacation or sick leave (leave with pay) to maintain medical benefits.

**Summary of Bill:**

A state employee who leaves state service to serve in the Peace Corps or to participate in a program sponsored by a humanitarian organization or a faith-based mission must be returned to his or her previous position or an equivalent position upon his or her return from service.

During the time the employee is serving in the Peace Corps, the employee will be considered on a leave of absence and will not lose his or her seniority. During such service, the employee shall be entitled to participate in insurance, annual leave, retirement pay and other benefits. Upon return, the employee cannot be discharged without cause from his or her position for one year.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.